



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

1401 EAST BROAD STREET  
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23219-2000

**GREGORY A. WHIRLEY**  
ACTING COMMISSIONER

November 8, 2005

Gregory A. Whirley  
Commonwealth Transportation Acting Commissioner  
1401 East Broad Street, Third Floor  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Commissioner Whirley:

The I-95/395 HOT Lanes PPTA Advisory Panel recommends that you enter into negotiations with Fluor-Transurban to reach a Comprehensive Agreement for improvements to approximately 56 miles of highway on I-95/395 from the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge to Massaponax. Our recommendations are based on the findings and attachments listed below. Those findings are in turn based on the criteria contained in the implementation guidelines for the Public-Private Transportation Act of 1995, the Code of Virginia, as amended. The attachments also include presentations made to the Advisory Panel, information received by the Advisory Panel, local government comments, public comments and staff recommendations.

### **Background**

The I-95/395 corridor (with the current HOV lanes) is one of the most important and highly traveled transportation corridors serving the Washington Metropolitan area. In recent years, the corridor has become congested not just at rush hour but during off peak hours and weekends as well. This congestion is driven by the growing population and job centers located in Arlington County, Fairfax County, Prince William County, Stafford County, Spotsylvania County, Fredericksburg City and other jurisdictions in the area.

Current traffic volume data received from the Northern Virginia District office indicate usage of HOV lanes during certain peak periods has already exceeded design capacity at some locations. We can expect that future increases in volumes at these locations, without adding additional capacity or restricting vehicle usage, will continue to add to the present traffic congestion and degradation of the HOV lanes.

On September 24, 2003, Clark/Shirley submitted an unsolicited conceptual proposal to VDOT for improvements to the I-95/395 corridor. Fluor-Transurban submitted a competing proposal for improvements to the corridor on March 15, 2004.

On January 6, 2005, an Initial Review Committee composed of VDOT staff reviewed both conceptual proposals and recommended that both proposals be advanced to the detailed stage. The Commissioner agreed with the findings and requested that both proposals be advanced to the detailed stage for further evaluation. In January 2005, the Commonwealth Transportation Board formally approved both conceptual proposals.

In June 2005, both Clark/Shirley and Fluor- Transurban submitted detailed proposals to VDOT (both detailed proposals are available on the VDOT web site and are part of this communication). Both proposals were then evaluated by the Panel.

The Panel met five times, with one session opened to public comment. During the Panel's deliberations we received 183 written comments on the proposals. Approximately 80 citizens attended the public comment session on September 21, 2005. Of those attending 28 presented verbal testimony at the meeting.

The following attachments further detail the recommendations of the panel:

- VDOT's Fact Sheets.
- Minutes of the Panel meetings.
- VDOT's Staff review.
- VDOT's Traffic analysis (HOV lanes)
- Local government comments.
- Public comments.
- VDOT Financial evaluation.
- Regional Traffic Analysis by MWCOG.
- VDOT's Side by Side Comparison.
- VDOT's Engineering evaluation.
- VDOT's CFO Recommendation.
- Questions from the panel and answers from the proposers.
- Final presentations from proposers.
- Findings of the Advisory Panel.
- Recommendations of the Advisory Panel.

Should you decide to enter into negotiations for this project we would suggest the following actions be taken before construction begins:

- NEPA Approval by FHWA.
- Investment Grade Toll Revenue Study.
- Revised Value Pricing Agreement between VDOT and Federal Highway Administration.
- Comprehensive Agreement.
- Detailed Financial Plan Between VDOT and Federal Highway Administration
- Design- Build Agreement.

It is our hope that these recommendations will be helpful to you in your deliberation and decision making. If you wish the Advisory Panel to re-convene, due to changed circumstances or additional information, we would be happy to do so.

I appreciate the opportunity to work with you and each member of the Panel to help improve the transportation system of the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

Signature on file at VDOT Central Office

John A. Rollison III  
Advisory Panel Chair